

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 17:1-15

1 Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife.

2 A servant who deals wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully and will share the inheritance as one of the brothers.

3 The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold, and the Lord tests hearts.

4 An evildoer listens to wicked lips, and a liar gives ear to a mischievous tongue.

5 Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker; he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

6 Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.

7 Fine speech is not becoming to a fool; still less is false speech to a prince.

8 A bribe is like a magic stone in the eyes of the one who gives it; wherever he turns he prospers.

9 Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.

10 A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.

11 An evil man seeks only rebellion, and a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

12 Let a man meet a she-bear robbed of her cubs rather than a fool in his folly.

13 If anyone returns evil for good, evil will not depart from his house.


14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out.

15 He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 17:1-15

AUTHOR: PHILLIP HOPKINS

As I read through these verses, it has reminded me just how far from the truth we have moved as a nation. Evil is being heralded as good, lies are being told as truths, and we see the vileness of man's heart tearing apart society and



Eternal PERSPECTIVE

Proverbs

lives. Whether it be the transgender movement, the tearing apart of the family unit, or divisiveness of a church congregation, we are seeing evil prevail and it is tearing people's lives apart. We are seeing foolish thoughts praised as wise. If you disagree, you are rejected and jeered. We are warned in verse 15 that justifying wickedness and condemning what is right are an abomination to the Lord. Amos 5:15 tells us to hate evil and love good. Paul reminds us of this same thing again in Romans 12:9, "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good."


As the world seems to spiral out of control, we can take refuge in the fact that the God who created everything is perfectly in control. We were told by Jesus in John 16:33 that we would face tribulations, but we could take courage because Jesus, the perfect Shepherd has overcome the world. Evil will not prevail! As the world falls into the trap of sin being good, we can take refuge in Christ and know that He is in control. When others slander your name, gossip, lie, cheat, rebel, or do evil things, God is in that working. Justice will be served, but on God's terms, not ours! Verse 13 tells us that when evil is returned for good, evil will not depart from that house. We know that God will deal justly with those who oppose Him. We are not promised a life of ease but rather one of trials.

Verse 3 reminds us that we will face trials, but they are to purify our hearts. Trials produce endurance (Romans 5:3, James 1:3). Trials produce hope (Romans 5:4). Through trials we learn to rely on God to bring us through the situation. We begin to rely on God and trust His plan for our lives. We can take courage in the midst of trials that once God sees us through it, there will be growth and blessings on the other side. Job is a great example of this. We can also look to Jonah and see that God causes trials to correct our paths. If we align our hearts with His, then the trial may be short-lived, we come into obedience, and He blesses the path before us. If we don't come into obedience, then we may face hardships like Israel did in the desert and the trial is made longer because of our rebellion against the will of God!

As I started this, I touched upon where our nation is. We are seeing the trials that come from disobedience towards God, and things will continue to spiral if we don't, as the church, work to bring our nation into obedience. We have to model obedience so others can see what it looks like. We have to be the light on a hill that Jesus talked about (Matthew 5:14-16). Those around us have to see us, and think "what do they have that I don't?" How are you modeling Christ to a world lost to sin?

Questions:

1. Where do you turn when the trials of life start? Are you drawing near to God when the storms of life hit, or forging forward on your own?



Eternal PERSPECTIVE --- *Proverbs*

2. What examples are you setting for the world around you? Are you conforming to the world, or are you setting yourself apart?
3. Where has God been leading you? Are you following in obedience?